

RFE is Serving Pro-Khrush Stew

WASHINGTON, March 19—In the final cold analysis, the moral solvency of Radio Free Europe hinges on one question alone: the content of the broadcasts which they transmit from their complex of transmitters in Germany and Portugal.

- Apropos of this, I have obtained a considerable array of RFE scripts, in various languages, with translations by their own personnel so there can be no claim that I distorted the sense in putting these broadcasts into English.

My first comment, as one with some little professional radio experience myself, is that it is not competent radio material.

Radio Free Europe is not manned by successful professional experts in the field of radio or news or politics or propaganda. It is staffed, instead, by friends of influential people including

the President and Secretary of State Dulles. They have no understanding of the fact that radio listening is one of the most highly competitive marketplaces in the world.

In other words, there is a very important thing known as listening audience which every program must build for itself on merit. Mr. Peroutka does not have it.

All of which suggests that very few people in Czechoslovakia are listening to Mr. Peroutka, so perhaps he's not important.

What he says in this script is most important, however, because it represents official RFE policy and a demonstration, at top level, of RFE's concept of "truth."

IT HAS TO DO with Khrushchev and his status as successor to Josef Stalin. It says that Khrushchev's policies are not important, because he only represents the thinking and demands of the Russian people. "The entire Russian society is on the move," Mr. Peroutka says to the people of Czechoslovakia, and "Khrushchev does not carry it on his back, it carries him . . . since the times of Lenin and Stalin, the entire background has changed . . . the limits of what Khrushchev can or cannot do are determined by the maturing of the Russian nation."

By way of trying to prove this incredible hogwash, Mr. Peroutka says that Khrushchev has resorted to the use of "popular slogans" such as "Western politicians use prior to elections." Then:

"The progressing democratization in Russia reveals itself by compelling the leaders to resort to demagoguery, because it is not enough to convince the Politburo or the Central Committee, and they feel the strong urge to win the people to their side."

Mr. Peroutka then states arbitrarily that Khrushchev has embarked upon a program of economic decentralization in Russia (for which I am unable to find any substantiation whatsoever) and says that this is always the forerunner of political decentralization. "Another word for it," he says, "is the forerunner of democratization."

This is the "truth" that RFE is telling to the people of Czechoslovakia—that Khrushchev is the servant of the Russian people, and that in order to stay in power, he has to obey their will. We'll look at some others at a later date.